

Claim(s)

[0027] Having thus described the preferred embodiments, the invention is now claimed to be:

1. A method of searching television programming information comprising:
 - (a) receiving a telephone call from a viewer via a telephone system;
 - (b) generating a search query in response to the telephone call;
 - (c) searching a database in accordance with the search query, said database containing television programming information;
 - (d) generating search results from the searching, said search results including entries from the database that correspond to the search query; and,
 - (e) sending the search results to a television receiver box of the viewer via a television system such that said search results are displayable upon a television operatively connected to the receiver box.
2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
identifying the viewer from which the telephone call is received via caller ID.
3. The method according to claim 1, wherein the search query is at least partially generated from spoken language from the viewer which is received via the telephone system and input into a voice recognition module.
4. The method according to claim 1, wherein only current television programming information is maintained in the database.
5. The method according to claim 1, wherein current television programming information and a period of future television programming information are maintained in the database.

6. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
deactivating the search results after the telephone call has terminated such that they are no longer displayable on the television.

7. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
announcing a summary of the search results to the viewer via the telephone system.

8. The method according to claim 1, wherein the search results include a list of channels showing programs which match the search query.

9. The method according to claim 8, wherein the viewer can selectively scroll through the list of channels.

10. The method according to claim 8, wherein the viewer can select a channel from the list of channels to view information about the program being shown on that channel.

11. A service control point connected to a telephone system and a television system, said service control point comprising:

query generating means for generating a search query in response to a telephone call received from a viewer via the telephone system;

a database in which television programming information is maintained; and,

searching means for searching the database in accordance with the search query received from the query generating means, said searching means generating search results which are sent to a television receiver box of the viewer via the television system such that said search results are displayable upon a television operatively connected to the television receiver box.

12. The service control point of claim 11, wherein the query generating means includes a voice recognition module that receives spoken language from the viewer and converts it into at least a portion of the search query.

13. The service control point of claim 11, wherein only current television programming information is maintained in the database.

14. The service control point of claim 11, wherein current television programming information and a period of future television programming information are maintained in the database.

15. The service control point of claim 11, wherein the television system is selected from a group consisting of a digital cable television system, an analog cable television system, and a satellite television system.

16. The service control point of claim 11, wherein the television programming information includes abstractions of program content.

17. The service control point of claim 11, wherein the database includes a searchable field containing identification of program types.

18. The service control point of claim 11, further comprising:
identification means for identifying the viewer from which a call is received.

19. The service control point of claim 18, wherein the identification means comprises caller ID.

20. The service control point of claim 11, wherein the search results include a list of channels showing programs which match the search query.